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FILE UNCL

TRENDS IN INTELLIGENCE**CIA reaches out to the campuses****John Hamer**/Times editorial columnist

IN A graduate class in public affairs at the University of Washington the other day, a professor told his students that they should seriously consider going to work for the Central Intelligence Agency.



Only a decade or so ago, that suggestion would have been a shocking bombshell in most college classrooms. Students would have laughed, hissed and jeered — or thrown things. A decade ago, on most campuses, few professors would have had the courage to make such a statement in public.

Yet after this class, a young graduate student told me that, yes, he planned to apply to the CIA. Fluent in Russian, with a master's degree in Soviet studies, his skills might be helpful to the agency, he said — adding casually that he was more interested in research and analysis than covert operations. But, no, he didn't have any political or ideological problems with working for the CIA.

Imagine the flak he'd have taken from his fellow students 10 or 15 years ago! He'd have been scorned and shunned, called a "CIA spook," accused of selling out to the most nefarious branch of the government establishment.

The obvious lesson: Times change. A related lesson: It's about time.

The controversies that have put the CIA in the headlines in recent months — mostly involving spies of various (and changeable) stripes — may pale in comparison to the scandals that racked the agency over the Bay of Pigs, Vietnam and Watergate.

Still, they underline the importance of attracting people to work in the intelligence field who are motivated, patriotic and incorruptible. The alienation of almost an entire generation of young people during the late Sixties and early Seventies surely hampered the intelligence community's efforts to recruit top-quality personnel — and may have contributed to some of the CIA's current problems.

There are encouraging signs that things have changed. Today the CIA actively recruits job applicants on campuses such as the University of Washington. A decade ago, the agency would have faced raucous demonstrations by angry radicals. Today, it receives numerous applications from serious students.

"They have a wide variety of job openings," said a spokeswoman at the U.W. placement office. "They look at a lot of different majors now, more than ever before. They are reaching out more, and making themselves a little more accessible."

She added: "They're very cooperative, very professional. And unlike some government agencies, they get their paperwork done on time."

In addition to more active recruiting of job applicants on campus, the CIA is also trying to increase its contacts with college faculties — awarding research contracts, hiring consultants, sponsoring scholarly conferences, and other efforts.

Again, not long ago such activities would have been widely criticized. When the Senate Intelligence Committee revealed in the mid-1970s that some professors had worked for the CIA without their universities' knowledge, and even written books under CIA contract, there was an enormous uproar about the threat to academic freedom. For years after, many academics strictly avoided any contact with the intelligence community.

But today the CIA is "aggressively rebuilding its bridges to U.S. campuses," according to a recent article in *The Boston Globe*. Using the academic community to improve the CIA's analyses of world economic and political events is reportedly a key goal of its deputy director for intelligence, Robert Gates.

Although the CIA will not reveal the extent of its contacts with the academic world, it has begun sending employees to academic conferences, having the agency's papers reviewed by professors, and seeking comment from scholars with different points of view.

The agency has sponsored research at Harvard, Brown, Rutgers, Villanova, Texas A&M and the University of Illinois, among other schools. It has funded scholars writing books and doing field work abroad. Former CIA officials told *The Globe* that about 150 professors currently serve as agency consultants or review drafts of intelligence analyses.

Are there any CIA contracts at the University of Washington?

"I'm not aware of any at all that we have," said Donald W. Allen, director of grant and contract services at the U.W. "I think we'd carefully look at any such agreement. One of the things that we would want to guarantee is freedom to publish. If there was an outright restriction on publication, chances are that grant wouldn't be accepted. There's a policy against classified contracts."

What about consulting by individual professors? "That would be up to the faculty member," Allen said. "If there are any contracts with faculty, I'm not aware of them."

Some continue to criticize any contact between the intelligence community and the academic world. But much of the criticism is based more on ideological biases left over from the Sixties and Seventies than on rational, objective analysis.

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